

REMARKS

In view of the above amendments and following remarks, reconsideration and further examination are requested.

Initially, the Examiner's attention is respectfully directed to the Information Disclosure Statement filed August 5, 2004.

By the current Amendment, claims 78, 98 and 116 have been amended, and claims 97 and 134 have been cancelled.

In sections 2-3 on page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner has held claims 109-124 withdrawn from further consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention. The basis for withdrawing claims 109-124 from further consideration is that apparatus claim 109 requires the same device to be used to shape the tip of the bump and to bond the chip to the electrode, which feature is not shared by method claim 76. Accordingly, the Examiner has stated that if claims 76 and 109 had been originally presented they would have been restricted for lack of unity for not possessing the same special technical feature. The withdrawal of claims 109-124 from further consideration is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

First, because method claim 76 does not recite that two separate devices are used to shape the tip of the bump and bond the electronic component to the electrode, nor precludes the same device for performing each of these operations, this claim covers an embodiment in which the same device is used to perform the shaping and bonding operations. Thus, claims 76 and 109 continue to share the same technical feature. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 109-124 are not directed to an invention that is independent or distinct from the originally filed invention, whereby these claims should be examined along with the other currently pending claims.

Additionally, it is appreciated that original claim 33 (to which new claim 109 generally corresponds) recited separate devices for performing separate operations; however, the "device for shaping...and...bonding" as now recited in claim 109 can arguably be said to include a device for shaping a bump and a device for bonding an electronic component to an electrode. In other words, this device for shaping and this device for bonding can be considered to be sub-devices of the device for shaping and bonding as recited in claim 109. For this additional reason, it is respectfully submitted that claims 109-124 are not directed to an invention that is independent or distinct from the originally

filed invention, whereby these claims should be examined along with the other currently pending claims.

Finally, if after considering the above arguments, the Examiner continues to believe that claims 109-124 are properly withdrawn from further consideration, then it is respectfully submitted that these claims should be considered by the Examiner for the following reason.

The instant application and the patent to Higashi et al., i.e. U.S. Patent No. 6,207,549, were, at the time the invention of the instant application was made, commonly owned by Matsushita Electric Industrial Co., Ltd. Thus, Higashi et al. is not available as prior art with regard to the instant application. Accordingly, because Higashi et al. is not available as prior art, the commonly shared technical features of claims 76 and 109 as interpreted by the Examiner, were not known. Thus, claims 109-124 should not be withdrawn from further consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention, and should be examined on their merits.

In view of the above, it is respectfully requested that the restriction requirement be withdrawn.

In response to the 35 U.S.C. § 112, first and second paragraph rejections, from claim 76 the phrase “without leveling said bump” has been deleted. This same phrase has been deleted from claim 116. And, claim 134 has been cancelled.

Claims 72-80, 82-96, 98-105, 107 and 125-142 have been rejected over a plurality of references for a variety of reasons. Each of these rejections is based on Higashi et al. However, as stated above, the instant application and Higashi et al. were commonly owned at the time of the invention of the instant application, and accordingly, Higashi et al. is not available as prior art. Thus, because Higashi et al. is not available as prior art, and because the rejection of each of the claims requires reliance on Higashi et al., it is respectfully submitted that the current rejections of record should be withdrawn.

Also, in view of the indication of claims 98 and 99 containing allowable subject matter, claim 98 has been rewritten in independent form.

Additionally, in the event that the Examiner now finds the application to be in condition for allowance, the Examiner is hereby authorized to cancel claims 126-130.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and an early Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

If after reviewing this Amendment, the Examiner believes that any issues remain which must be resolved before the application can be passed to issue, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' undersigned representative by telephone to resolve such issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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